

Message Text

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10

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 ACDA-07 IO-13 /080 W

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R 050757Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 761

INFO USMISSION BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

USMISSION USNATO BRUSSELS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PRAGUE 2242

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, PINS, US, WB, CZ

SUBJECT: CZECHOSLOVAK REACTION TO BERLIN ARREST

REF: USBERLIN 1607 (NOTAL) AND PREVIOUS

1. SUMMARY: COMMUNIST PARTY ORGAN RUDE PRAVO AUGUST 4

PUBLISHED COMMENT ON SECOND PAGE ABOUT ARREST IN BERLIN OF
CZECHOSLOVAK "COMMERCIAL ATTACHE." CZECHOSLOVAK GOVERNMENT
NOT EXPECTED TO LODGE ANY OFFICIAL COMPLAINT WITH FRG EMBASSY IN
PRAGUE BECAUSE OF ITS POLICY ON ALLIES' RESPONSIBILITY FOR EVENTS IN
WEST BERLIN. END SUMMARY.

2. ARTICLE ENTITLED "ARRANT PROVOCATION" STARTS WITH EXPRESSION
OF DISBELIEF THAT AN INCIDENT WHICH "COULD HAVE BEEN A SCENE FROM
AN AMERICAN GANGSTER FILM SET IN CHICAGO" SHOULD HAVE TAKEN
PLACE. EMPHASIZING THAT VLADIMIR SIMEK WAS HOLDER OF A
DIPLOMATIC PASSPORT, ARTICLE DESCRIBES HIS BEING SET UPON BY
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WEST GERMAN POLICE, HANDCUFFED, STRIPPED NAKED, AND SUBJECTED

TO A HUMILIATING PHYSICAL SEARCH, AND GOES ON TO SAY THAT "SUCH METHODS ARE ALREADY TOO WELL KNOWN FROM THE PAST, AND MANY OF OUR CITIZENS HAVE EXPERIENCED THEM ON THEIR OWN FLESH," AN UNKIND REFERENCE TO NAZI EXPERIENCE. ARTICLE CONTINUES BY NOTING THAT SPRINGER PRESS HAS BEEN "TRYING TO REVIVE THE COLD WAR AND POISON THE INTERNATIONAL ATMOSPHERE." IT ALSO MENTIONED "PEOPLE WHO WILLINGLY LEND THE PAGES OF THEIR NEWSPAPERS AND TELEVISION SCREENS TO TREACHEROUS EMIGRANTS," AN OBVIOUS REFERENCE TO RECENT WEST GERMAN AND AUSTRIAN TELEVISION COVERAGE OF FORMER CZECHOSLOVAK ESPIONAGE AGENT FROLIK'S ALLEGATIONS. ARTICLE CONCLUDES BY SAYING THAT ARREST, WHICH CAME JUST ONE YEAR AFTER THE SIGNING OF HELSINKI ACCORDS DOES NOT CONTRIBUTE TO A GOOD INTERNATIONAL ATMOSPHERE.

3. FRG EMBASSY IN PRAGUE HAS RECEIVED NO OFFICIAL PROTEST OF INCIDENT, AND DOES NOT EXPECT ONE IN VIEW OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S STAND ON BERLIN. MATTER WAS RAISED VERY INFORMALLY WITH FRG EMBASSY FIRST SECRETARY HORST PAKOWSKI, WHO CALLED AT CZECHOSLOVAK MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE MORNING OF AUGUST 3. PAKOWSKI'S OPPOSITE NUMBER IN MINISTRY ASKED IF PAKOWSKI DID NOT AGREE THAT "THAT WAS AN INDECENT WAY TO TREAT A COMMERCIAL REPRESENTATIVE, IF HE HAD DONE NOTHING WRONG." PAKOWSKI REPORTEDLY SAID THAT INDEED IT WAS INDECENT TREATMENT IF, IF FACT, THE MAND "HAD DONE NOTHING WORNG." EMBASSY SUSPECTS THAT INFORMAL RAISING OF MATTER BY FOREIGN TRADE MINISTRY OFFICIAL MAY HAVE BEEN A WAY OF SUBSTANTIATING CZECHOSLOVAK CLAIM THAT SIMEK BELONGED TO THAT MINISTRY, WITHOUT LODGING A FORMAL PROTEST WITH THE FRG EMBASSY HERE, WHICH WOULD CONSTITUTE A BREAK WITH TRADITIONAL CZECHOSLOVAK POLICY ON STATUS OF BERLIN.

4. ORIGINAL CZECHOSLOVAK PRESS REPORT NAMED SIMEK AS "COMMERCIAL ATTACHE" WHO HAD BEEN SENT ON AN "OFFICIAL TRIP" TO BERLIN. EMBASSY HAS NOT ECOUNTERED HIM IN DEALINGS WITH FOREIGN TRADE MINISTRY OR IN ANY OTHER CONNECTION.

5. TEXT OF ARTICLE BEING POUCHED TO DEPARTMENT.
BYRNE

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